

Dear Sen. Bye, Rep. Walker and Honorable members of the Appropriations Committee,

As a custodian in a school district one may take on the job without a full realization of their purpose. To provide students, staff, and all who enter a clean, healthy, and safe building, including the grounds, is the reason schools have custodians, security officers, maintenance employees, and a list of others. They keep the cogs in working order to allow each school day to go by as smooth as possible for the folks who have dedicated their lives to teaching and supporting our young minds. Beyond sweeping classrooms and hallways it is our duty to ensure proper lighting in classrooms, sanitized bathroom fixtures, safe grounds leading up to and around the building, functioning windows and doors in the event of an emergency, and remedy any leak, spill, or happening throughout the day that interferes with the educational process. Unfortunately these tasks require funding, and so the battle begins on how to offer the best buildings possible while concurrently offering the best education possible. When a school is inadequately funded the strain is felt uniformly, and the victims are the students.

The New Britain School district is in need of more than just flat funding for its students. There are too many variables to assume all will just go as it should; the house sized mounds of snow from our parking lots are proof of this. While we work tirelessly to fulfill our end of the deal, students are being packed into classrooms in front of teachers whose expectations are to cater to the individual. With each additional student desk Tetris-ed into a room, the opportunity for individual instruction, attention, and ultimately success, is challenged and weakened. There are over 10,000 students in New Britain; our school district is a town within our city! Many students spend breakfast, lunch, and dinner in our buildings. They are here sometimes as late as 9 p.m. rehearsing for a play or concert. After school they are in the gyms, or weight room, or running in the hallways, in dedication to their sport. When it comes to accommodating our students staff goes above and beyond, not just within contract hours. It is that same notion we ask of our legislators: to go above and beyond.

To keep our district functioning at the level it has will require an increase of \$5.3 million in ECS funding. Though a list can be generated that would quadruple that number in the name of education, granting us the opportunity to keep pushing forward as we have would be a great service to our student body. The hard work and dedication of our staff is the true equity of our district. With adequate funding, equal opportunity for education among every student can become a reality. Please consider our school district's needs during this year's budget allocations.

Sincerely,

Jason Karwowski Custodian  
New Britain High School

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